



NEWS RELEASE

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NEBRASKA'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE RANKS 4TH IN THE NATION

Nebraska's high school graduation rate ranks fourth nationally with 86 percent of seniors graduating in 2011, according to the U.S. Department of Education's first-ever study focusing on a new method for determining graduation rates.

The results were released this week and are available at [U.S. Department of Education study](#). Under the new calculation method called the Cohort Graduation Rate, Nebraska and other states are required to track students as 9th graders to determine how many graduate four years later.

Iowa ranked at the top with an 88 percent graduation rate followed by Vermont and Wisconsin each with an 87 percent graduation rate. Nebraska ranked fourth with an 86 percent four-year cohort graduation rate, tying with five other states: Indiana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Tennessee and Texas.

Nebraska's 2011 five-year cohort graduation rate was higher, 89 percent. Some students take longer to graduate from high school for a number of reasons, such as illness or family circumstances, and students with special needs may attend school until age 21.

"Our teachers and administrators work hard to support all students, especially those students who find school challenging and are at risk of dropping out," said Nebraska Education Commissioner Roger Breed. "While this is good news for our students and their schools, the results are uneven. Some groups of students graduate at lower rates. That is our challenge: Closing the gaps in graduation rates and in student achievement.

"Nebraska's overall goal is to graduate 90 percent or more of our high school students, year after year," Breed said.

New data released recently showed that the state's 2012 four-year cohort graduation rate was higher than that used in the study, with 88 percent of Nebraska's seniors graduating last spring. And, while the gaps among student groups persisted, most student groups graduated at higher rates when comparing the two years of data.

Student Groups	2011 Graduation Rate	2012 Graduation Rate
All students	86.07%	87.62%
Male	83.32%	85.14%
Female	88.95%	90.22%
Students eligible for free and reduced lunch	77.93%	79.52%
Special Education Students	69.63%	72.11%
English Language Learners	61.86%	64.07%
Hispanic	74.56%	77.98%
American Indian/Alaska Native	60.69%	66.95%
Asian	80.54%	83.52%
Black or African American	67.24%	73.60%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	90.00%	82.35%
White	90.12%	91.27%
Two or More Races	88.61%	84.63%